

What is claimed is:

1. A USB peripheral device belonging to a model line of identical peripheral devices, said peripheral device comprising:
  - a USB interface enabling connection of the peripheral device to a USB port of a host device; and
  - memory for storing a USB device identifier, said USB device identifier comprising a standard device identifier for all the peripheral devices of the model line.
2. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
  - said USB port comprises a virtual communication port.
3. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
  - said peripheral device comprises a printer.
4. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 3, wherein:
  - said USB port comprises a virtual printer port.
5. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 3, wherein:
  - said USB port comprises a printer name associated with said printer.
6. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
  - said standard USB device identifier identifies each peripheral device in the model line to the host device as identical devices, thereby preventing device driver reinstallation and communication port reassignment when swapping said peripheral device for another peripheral device from said model line.
7. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:
  - said standard USB device identifier is configurable.

8. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier for said peripheral device is configurable to allow two peripheral devices from the model line to be connected to said host device simultaneously.

9. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier is configurable to control the communications port of the host device that said peripheral device is associated with.

10. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein said configuration of said USB device identifier is enabled by a configuration tool.

11. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 10, wherein said configuration tool comprises a software application running on the host device.

12. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 10, wherein said configuration tool comprises a separate device capable of communicating with said peripheral device.

13. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 7, wherein:

said peripheral device comprises a printer; and  
said USB device identifier is configured via a printer key pad.

14. A peripheral device in accordance with claim 1, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier comprises a model designation for said model line.

15. A method for enabling USB peripheral devices from a model line of peripheral devices to be interchanged at a USB port of a host device without reinstallation of a new device driver or reassignment of a new communication port, comprising:

providing each USB peripheral device from said model line with an identical standard USB device identifier.

16. A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said USB port comprises a virtual communication port.

17. A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said peripheral device comprises a printer.

18. A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein:

said USB port comprises a virtual printer port.

19. A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein:

said USB port comprises a printer name associated with said printer.

20. A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier identifies each peripheral device in the model line to a host device as identical devices.

21. A method in accordance with claim 15, further comprising:

enabling configuration of the standard USB device identifier.

22. A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier for said peripheral device is configurable to allow two peripheral devices from the model line to be connected to said host device simultaneously.

23. A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier is configurable to control the communications port of the host device that said peripheral device is associated with.

24. A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein said configuration of said USB device identifier is enabled by a configuration tool.

25. A method in accordance with claim 24, wherein said configuration tool comprises a software application running on the host device.

26. A method in accordance with claim 24, wherein said configuration tool comprises a separate device capable of communicating with said peripheral device.

27. A method in accordance with claim 21, wherein:

said peripheral device comprises a printer; and  
said USB device identifier is configured via a printer key pad.

28. A method in accordance with claim 15, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier comprises a model designation for said model line.

29. A standard USB device identifier for a model line of USB peripheral devices, comprising:  
a string of text data for identifying each peripheral device of said model line of peripheral devices when connected to a USB port of a host device, said string of text data being identical for each peripheral device in said model line.

30. An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:

said USB port comprises a virtual communication port.

31. An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:

said peripheral device comprises a printer.

32. An identifier in accordance with claim 31, wherein:

said USB port comprises a virtual printer port.

33. An identifier in accordance with claim 31, wherein:

said USB port comprises a printer name associated with said printer.

34. An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier identifies each peripheral device in the model line to the host device as identical devices.

35. An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier is configurable.

36. An identifier in accordance with claim 35, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier is configurable to allow two peripheral devices from the model line to be connected to said host device simultaneously.

37. An identifier in accordance with claim 35, wherein:

said standard USB device identifier is configurable to control the communications port of the host device that said peripheral device is associated with.

38. An identifier in accordance with claim 35, wherein said configuration of said USB device identifier is enabled by a configuration tool.

39. An identifier in accordance with claim 38, wherein said configuration tool comprises a software application running on the host device.

40. An identifier in accordance with claim 38, wherein said configuration tool comprises a separate device capable of communicating with said peripheral device.

41. An identifier in accordance with claim 35, wherein:

    said peripheral device comprises a printer; and

    said USB device identifier is configured via a printer key pad.

42. An identifier in accordance with claim 29, wherein:

    said standard USB device identifier comprises a model designation for said model line.